

1984 by George Orwell

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MODULE: STUDENT VERSION

Reading Selections for This Module

Orwell, George. *1984*. 1949. Centennial ed. New York: Harcourt Brace, 2003. Print.

Optional Reading Selections

Maass, Peter, and Megha Rajagopalan. "That's No Phone. That's My Tracker." *New York Times* 13 July 2012. Web. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/15/sunday-review/thats-not-my-phone-its-my-tracker.html?_r=1&ref=technology>.

Winton, Richard. "Long Beach Police to Use 400 Cameras Citywide to Fight Crime." *Los Angeles Times* 15 Aug. 2012. Web. <<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-long-beach-cameras-20120815,0,783037.story>>.

Other Works Cited

Associated Press. "FBI Abandons Carnivore Wiretap Software: Commercial Program, 3rd-Party Wiretaps Now Used." *MSNBC.com*. NBC News Digital, 18 Jan. 2005. Web. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6841403/ns/technology_and_science-tech_and_gadgets/t/fbi-abandons-carnivore-wiretap-software/>.

DesMarais, Christina. "This Smartphone Tracking Tech Will Give You the Creeps: New GPS Tech Can Track Your Every Move. Should You Fear It or Embrace It?" *PC World*. International Data Group, 22 May 2012. Web. <http://www.pcworld.com/article/255802/this_smartphone_tracking_tech_will_give_you_the_creeps.html>.

Georgiton, Peter J. "The FBI's Carnivore: How Federal Agents May Be Viewing Your Personal E-Mail and Why There Is Nothing You Can Do About It." *Ohio State Law Journal* 62.1831 (2001): n. pag. Web. <<http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/students/groups/oslj/files/2012/03/62.6.georgiton.pdf>>.

Henderson, Tom. "How I Divorced Google: Leave Google, and Save Your Privacy in 7 days (Or At Least Get a Start on It)." *ITworld*. International Data Group, 16 March 2012. Web. <<http://www.itworld.com/it-managementstrategy/259252/how-i-divorced-google>>.

Tyson, Jeff. "How Carnivore Worked." *How Stuff Works*. Discovery Communications, n.d. Web. 2 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.howstuffworks.com/carnivore.htm>>.

Reading Rhetorically

Prereading (Section One)

Activity 1

Getting Ready to Read: Define “Orwellian”

Introduction: Sometimes an author’s ideas are so unique and powerful that his or her name becomes synonymous with the ideas. One example is Niccolò Machiavelli, whose book *The Prince* advises a new ruler that the end always justifies the means in acquiring and maintaining power. Thus, the term “Machiavellian” describes a plan that is clever, effective, but also deceitful and unethical. Ivan Pavlov, a Russian scientist, rang a bell every time he fed his dogs and demonstrated that over time the dogs associated the bell with food and began to salivate when they heard it. Now conditioned responses like this, such as when high school students respond in certain ways to the bells and buzzers that designate class periods, are called “Pavlovian.” In his analysis of dreams, Sigmund Freud found that the imagery of dreams was full of sexual symbols. Now the practice of finding such symbols in dreams, stories, and everyday objects is called “Freudian.”

The word “Orwellian” is probably almost as commonly used as the terms mentioned above. However, the meanings and associations of “Orwellian” are as complex as the world of the novel. It is sometimes difficult to pin down exactly what someone means by the word. It might refer to a totalitarian government, a government that tries to control all the actions and beliefs of its citizens. It might refer to the use of surveillance technology, such as hidden cameras and microphones, as part of that effort to control. It could refer to the particular ways of speaking and thinking that Big Brother and the ruling party in the novel prescribe in “Newspeak.” It might even refer to the rewriting of history to fit the political needs of the present. Of course, it could be a combination of two or more of the above. As we read *1984*, we will return to the question of the meaning of “Orwellian” several times.

Orwell wrote this novel in 1948. He turned the last two digits around to come up with 1984. The novel is a work of science fiction about an imagined future, but it draws on what was for Orwell the recent past, the history of World War II, in which the fascist government of Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Germany fought the communist government of Josef Stalin’s Soviet Union. Although fascism and communism are considered to be opposite political systems, both countries had authoritarian governments with powerful dictators, secret police, and violent suppression of political opponents. In imagining the country of Oceania and its ruler Big Brother, Orwell gives the government the power to watch and control every aspect of a citizen’s life through ever-present two-way “telescreens” that both display propaganda and observe the viewer.

The year 1984 has come and gone. Are the questions and possibilities of *1984*, the novel, still relevant? Let's look at some recent articles.

Christina DesMarais, writing in *PC World* says in "This Smartphone Tracking Tech Will Give You the Creeps: New GPS Tech Can Track Your Every Move":

Privacy fans, take note: A new technology, called Indoor Positioning System, could push your worry meter to the max. IPS allows pinpoint tracking of any Wi-Fi-enabled device, such as a smartphone or tablet, within a building. This means that an IPS service could easily track you—right down to, say, the table you're occupying in a mall's food court—as long as your mobile devices' Wi-Fi is turned on. And, if you're a typical device user, your Wi-Fi is always on, right?

Does it bother you if a subscriber to a location service can tell exactly where you are at all times without your knowledge by following your device? Tom Henderson, writing in *ITworld*, became so concerned about how much Google knew about his online behavior that he tried to completely eliminate Google from his online services. In "How I Divorced Google: Leave Google, and Save Your Privacy in 7 Days (Or At Least Get a Start on It)," he writes,

When I sit at home, Google (unless I consciously prevent it) knows where I sit, on what machine, and what time of day I'm there. Data is collected not only from the search engine site, but sites that I visit that have Google maps, and so forth. The penetration of Google's ability to sniff a single individual's location and preferences is unprecedented. Google knows more about me than my mother.

Of course, if Henderson's mother subscribed to the Indoor Positioning System described above, she would know where he is too. Is this what people would call "Orwellian" surveillance? In these examples, the purpose of the surveillance or what the observers will do with the information are not clear. It is not the government that is observing the citizens. However, the government certainly has access to information of this type if it wants to. Of course, sometimes it does. In fact, the FBI created its own Internet surveillance system called "Carnivore," which it later abandoned in favor of commercial products. The Associated Press reports,

The FBI has effectively abandoned its custom-built Internet surveillance technology, once known as Carnivore, designed to read e-mails and other online communications among suspected criminals, terrorists and spies, according to bureau oversight reports submitted to Congress.

Instead, the FBI said it has switched to unspecified commercial software to eavesdrop on computer traffic during such investigations and has increasingly asked Internet providers to

conduct wiretaps on targeted customers on the government's behalf, reimbursing companies for their costs.

Jeff Tyson, in "How Carnivore Worked," observed that for many, it was "eerily reminiscent of George Orwell's book *1984*." Apparently, there have been misuses of this technology. Peter J. Georgiton, writing in an *Ohio State Law Review* article, "The FBI's Carnivore: How Federal Agents May Be Viewing Your Personal E-Mail and Why There Is Nothing You Can Do about It," says,

Instances of misconduct by the FBI demonstrate that unsupervised use of Carnivore could easily lead to abuse. In the end, judicial supervision of the FBI's use of Carnivore will be necessary to prevent the Orwellian situation of *1984*—where everyone's thoughts and writings are being probed by an overbearing, omnipotent, and intrusive federal government.

Two of the sources above connect the government's attempts to read the emails and other online communications of "criminals, terrorists, and spies" to the "Orwellian" world of *1984*. At this point you should have some idea of what people mean when they use the word "Orwellian."

Quickwrite: In your *1984* notebook, write your own definition of what the word "Orwellian" means to you. Does the word apply to our society today? Why or why not?

Activity 2

Getting Ready to Read

Read the following scenario:

You and many of your friends are big fans of a pop group called "The Sleazy Dirtbags." The group has catchy beats and melodies, but the lyrics of the songs are hard to understand. Nobody really cares. They just like the music and talk about it a lot on Facebook and in text messages. However, a news station hires an audio analyst to transcribe the lyrics and finds what they say are hidden messages calling for a violent revolution against the government and the assassination of political figures. The songs become a big political issue and numerous politicians publically denounce the group. Some fans of the group try to defend the songs by saying that the lyrics have been misinterpreted, but other groups embrace the message and hold anti-government demonstrations. The lead singer leaves the country and goes into hiding. Other groups hold anti-Dirtbag demonstrations. A psychologist says on a news program that the songs might have subliminal messages that could inspire young people to violence. Under pressure from politicians, the FBI announces that it will collect email records, text messages, and Facebook conversations about the songs from all of the band's fans to look for a pattern of conspiracy or possible plans for violence. They promise that every message about the group anywhere on the Internet will be thoroughly investigated. Suddenly Dirtbag fans are public enemy number 1, and you are one of them.

In your notebook, answer the following questions:

- Do you think that this could happen in the United States? Why or why not?
- If this happened, what would you do? Would you change your communication habits? Would you be more concerned about privacy?
- If you got a call from the FBI or if agents knocked on your door, what would you say? What would you do? How would you feel? Would you be scared? Would it change your life?
- Would you call this situation “Orwellian”? Why or why not?

Now discuss your answers with a partner. If your partner’s answers are different from yours, make notes about the differences.

Activity 3

Exploring Key Concepts

The following political concepts often come up in discussions of *1984*:

Authoritarian—The government is the authority. The individual obeys. This is the opposite of a libertarian philosophy, in which the government leaves the individual alone as much as possible.

Totalitarian—In totalitarian rule, the government tries to control every aspect of the lives of its citizens, including their thoughts and beliefs, by any means possible.

Oligarchical Collectivism—Aristotle defines three types of government, each with a good form in which the ruler or rulers have the good of the state in mind and a bad form in which the rulers govern by self-interest.

Aristotle’s Three Forms of Government		
Type	Good Form	Bad Form
One Ruler	Monarchy: rule by one wise person	Tyranny: rule by one bad person
Small Group Rule	Aristocracy: rule by a few wise people	Oligarchy: rule by a few bad people
Mass Rule	Polity or “constitutional government”: rule by the people for the good of the whole	Democracy: rule by the people for individual self-interest

Aristotle uses these terms a bit differently from how they are used in the U.S. today. “Collectivism” emphasizes the good of the whole over the individual.

Utopia—A perfect, happy society in which all of humanities problems have been solved.

Anti-Utopia or Dystopia—A nightmare society in which life is as difficult and unhappy as it could be; often the result of trying to create a utopia.

In small groups, discuss the political concepts above. How do they apply to various countries in the world today? How do they apply to the U.S.? Write down your group's ideas in your notebook.

Activity 4

Surveying the Text

Look at your copy of *1984*.

- What, if anything, is on the cover?
- What does the cover art mean?
- Are there any comments from reviewers or critics on the back or the front? Are there pictures anywhere on the cover?
- Is there a summary of the novel on the flyleaf (if present)?
- Is there a short biography of the author or other explanatory materials?
- Is there a Foreword or an Afterword? Who wrote them? Do you think you should read them? If so, when?
- How is the book divided? Are there chapter titles? Sections?

Write answers to these questions in your *1984* notebook.

Activity 5

Reading the First Page

In the absence of section and chapter titles, the best way to preview the book is to read the first two paragraphs of the novel. What details do you notice that seem odd? What predictions can you make about the world of the novel from these details? Write your predictions and the reasons for them in your *1984* notebook.

Activity 6

Flipping Through the Book

Flipping through the pages of a book can reveal some important elements about the contents. Flip through the book looking for text or illustrations or other features that stand out. What do these elements mean? How do you think they fit into the story? Write down in your *1984* notebook some of the details you notice.

Activity 7

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Based on your interpretation of the details on the first page and those you noticed from flipping through the book, write a paragraph describing the world of the book, the viewpoint character, Winston Smith, and your thoughts about what you think will happen to him.

Activity 8

Fun with Doublethink

Big Brother, the government of Oceania, attempts to control the ideas of the population by introducing an invented language, “Newspeak.” Newspeak is a simplified version of “Oldspeak” or English. The grammar and rules of Newspeak are described in an appendix to the novel, but a few words are introduced early in the book.

- Ingsoc—“English Socialism,” the national ideology of Oceania.
- doublethink—The ability to believe two contradictory ideas at once. “War is peace” and “Freedom is slavery” are two examples. Doublethink is necessary for life in Oceania.
- thoughtcrime—Thinking thoughts that are against the party or that question party policies or actions. Thinking “Down with Big Brother” is an example. The Thought Police monitor everyone to detect possible thoughtcrime.

Do you ever find yourself believing two contradictory notions at the same time? In *1984*, this is called “Doublethink.” It could be something as common as “He/she loves me; he/she loves me not.” Is it possible to believe both of those statements at once? Or if your grandmother or other loved one is very sick, is it possible to believe both that she will get well, but also that she will not? Is it possible to believe strongly in a principle such as “Honesty is the best policy” and then do the opposite for other reasons? In your group, discuss examples of doublethink in our daily lives. Write down the best examples in your *1984* notebook.

Activity 9

Fun with Thoughtcrime

Do you ever find yourself thinking thoughts that are against the organization or activity you are participating in? In *1984*, thinking thoughts against Big Brother is called “thoughtcrime.” Think of an organization you belong to or are familiar with. (It could even be your school.) Every organization has rules, beliefs, principles, and standards. If your thoughts at times go against the basic beliefs of the organization, even while you are outwardly participating normally, in *1984* terms that could be considered “thoughtcrime.” Of course, this happens to all of us at times. What organization do you have in mind? What would be examples of thoughtcrime for that organization? Write down some examples in your notebook.

Reading (Section One)

Activity 10

Reading for Understanding

First, read the questions below just to get an idea of some of the items you will be looking for. Then read Section One, keeping these questions in mind along with the predictions you made in Activities 5, 6 and 7. As you are reading, make check marks in the margins when you find a passage that may be relevant to these questions or your predictions. (Use sticky notes if you can't write in the book.) Don't worry if you don't find something for every question. You will be able to go back later.

Chapter I

1. What is a “telescreen”? How is it different from the televisions we know? Is it possible to make a television that could see and hear everything in the room? Could such a device be used for discovering criminals and terrorists? Could it be used for political control? Would it be a good idea to install such a device in every household?
2. What are the four government ministries that control the world of Big Brother? In our own society, we have departments in the federal government such as the Department of Defense and the Department of Education. Are these the same as the ministries in Oceania? How are they different?
3. Why does Winston want to keep a diary? Why, even though it is not illegal because there are no laws, could he be punished by death or 25 years in a labor camp for possessing it?
4. What is the “Two-minutes Hate”? What effect does it have on the people? Who is Emanuel Goldstein? Why is it important to hate him?

Chapter II

5. Why are parents in Oceania often afraid of their children?
6. What does O'Brien say to Winston in his dream? What do you think it might mean?

Chapter III

7. What does Winston dream about? What does it tell us about him?
8. How can the exercise instructor see that Winston is not touching his toes?

Chapter IV

9. What is Winston's job in the Ministry of Truth? Is he good at it? How does he feel about it?

Chapter V

10. What is the purpose of Newspeak? Who will eventually speak it?
11. Who are the Thought Police?
12. Why does Winston think that his colleague, Symes, will be “vaporized”?

Chapter VI

13. What kind of marriage does Winston have? Why does he live alone?

Chapter VII

14. Who are the “proles”? Why does Winston write, “If there is hope, it lies in the proles”?
15. Winston quotes from a textbook about the “capitalists” in frock coats and top hats who ran London before the revolution. Is there any truth to this description? Is there any way for Winston to check on its accuracy?
16. What is the Chestnut Tree Café? Who are Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford? What happens to them?
17. Winston writes, “I understand HOW. I do not understand WHY.” What does he mean by this?

Chapter VIII

18. Why does Winston return to the junk shop where he bought the diary? What does he buy there?
19. Why is Winston scared of the girl from the fiction department?

Activity 11

Revisiting Predictions

Look at the paragraph and other notes you wrote in your notebook regarding your predictions about the world of the novel. Which ones were confirmed? Which ones were wrong? Which ones are still undecided? Write another paragraph updating your first one.

Activity 12

Sharing Answers

Discuss the questions assigned to your group from the above list. In answering them, refer to specific page numbers and passages in your copy of the novel. Share your answers with the class. Write down the answers to the other questions that other groups came up with if they are different from your own.

Activity 13

Class Discussion

The novel begins with Winston arriving at his apartment and beginning to write in his diary. Then it shifts to events that happened earlier in the morning and describes the “Two-minute Hate.” Throughout the novel, Orwell shifts back and forth in time, sometimes describing dreams or memories.

- What is the effect of this time shifting on the reader?
- Does it help keep us engaged, or does it confuse us?
- Why does Orwell do it?

Activity 14

Noticing Language

Reading a novel means encountering many unknown words and many words of which you have only a vague understanding. The situation and the surrounding text will provide some contextual clues about the meanings of unknown words. Knowledge of Latin and Greek roots can also help. It is possible for a reader to read and understand a novel without knowing all the words. However, reading novels can significantly increase your vocabulary.

There are eight chapters in Section One of *1984*. After you have read Section One, for each chapter, choose one or more words that are either unknown to you or that you are uncertain about. Choose words that seem to be important or interesting because of their context or frequency or even because they sound interesting. Keep choosing until you have 10 words, which means you will have more than one for at least two chapters. For each word you choose, do the following:

- Copy the sentence in which you found it in your *1984* notebook.
- Underline or highlight the word.
- Name its part of speech in the sentence.
- Write down some ideas about what it might mean and why you think so. Don't be afraid to be wrong. You are just making educated guesses.
- In your group, take turns sharing the words and sentences you chose. Ask group members to help you define your words more accurately. Some will probably know your words better than you do. You will probably know more about other words that they have chosen.
- Look up your words in a good dictionary or online. How close were you and the group to the dictionary meaning?
- Write your own sentences using the words correctly.

Activity 15

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

In Chapter VIII, Winston visits a district that is inhabited by proles. The proles are generally friendly, but they speak informally and use a lot of slang. Winston visits a pub because he wants to ask an old man about the past, especially about what the party says about capitalists. When Winston first sees him, he is arguing with the barman. He says “I arst you civil enough, didn’t I? You telling me you ain’t got a pint mug in the ‘ole bleeding boozer?” What does he mean by that in standard English? Why doesn’t the barman understand?

Select two or three sentences spoken by the old man in the pub. Copy them into your notebook and translate them into standard English. Then discuss what effect Orwell was trying to create by representing the old man’s speech in slang and dialect. Are the old man’s words as effective in standard English?

Postreading (Section One)

Activity 16

Summarizing and Responding

The first part of a novel should do at least three things:

- Establish the setting of the action, making the world of the story real to us in details and principles.
- Establish the characters (especially the viewpoint character) in terms of personality, role or job, and strengths and weaknesses.
- Set the action in motion by giving the characters things to do and problems to solve.

It may also hint at some of the themes or big ideas that the novel will explore and develop.

Review your marginal notes, sticky notes, word lists, and answers to questions to solidify your understanding of Section One of the novel. Write a paragraph summarizing Section One in terms of the setting, the characters, the intentions of the characters, and any ideas you have about the themes of the novel.

Activity 17

Panel Discussions

1. Language and Thought: Winston’s friend Symes says that the purpose of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought and make thoughtcrime impossible. He says, “The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect.” Do you think that it is possible to create an artificial language that will control what people think? If we eliminate the words for bad ideas, will that eliminate the ideas? Is this why we prohibit certain words from

radio and television? (Participants in this panel may want to preview the appendix, “The Principles of Newspeak.”)

2. **The Power of Naming:** Winston lives at “Victory Mansions,” drinks “Victory Gin,” and smokes “Victory Cigarettes.” When he can find them, he probably uses “Victory” razor blades too. Why is everything called “Victory”? Does it make people feel more positive about the future? What are some examples of this kind of naming in our own society?
3. **The Power of Propaganda:** The telescreen gives messages of glorious victories and great abundance of goods even as rocket bombs continue to strike and the chocolate ration is cut. Winston doesn’t really believe any of it. Do you think most people in Oceania believe what they see and hear on the telescreen? How long can people believe a never-ending stream of falsehoods and propaganda? What kinds of safeguards are in place to prevent this from happening in our own society?
4. **Rewriting the Past:** Winston’s job at the Ministry of Truth is to rewrite news stories so that they don’t contradict the current party line or discuss “unpersons” who have been eliminated. He is constantly changing the record of the past. In our own society, libraries used to keep bound copies of newspapers and magazines going back more than 100 years. Now because of storage requirements, most of those materials have been converted to microfiche or digitized. Does this increase the possibility that the record of the past will be changed or lost? Is it possible that some of you might end up with a job like Winston’s? Is it important to know what the past was really like? Why or why not?
5. **Individual or Dangerous Loner?** In the second paragraph of Chapter VIII, Winston has decided to go to a neighborhood inhabited by proles instead of going to the Community Center. He thinks,

In principle a Party member had no spare time, and was never alone except in bed. It was assumed that when he was not working, eating, or sleeping he would be taking part in some kind of communal recreations; to do anything that suggested a taste for solitude, even to go for a walk by yourself, was always slightly dangerous. There was a word for it in Newspeak: ownlife, it was called, meaning individualism and eccentricity.

In our own society, some people prefer to be always doing things with other people and do not want to be alone. Is there anything wrong with expecting everyone to take part in community activities? Do people have a right to be alone? Why or why not?

Prereading (“The Principles of Newspeak”)

Activity 18

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

You already know something about Newspeak from reading Section One. What do you expect to find in an appendix called “The Principles of Newspeak”? Write your prediction down in your notebook.

Reading (“The Principles of Newspeak”)

Activity 19

Reading for Understanding

Read the questions below. Then read the appendix looking for relevant information that will answer the questions.

1. According to the appendix, what was the purpose of Newspeak?
2. What are the three different levels of vocabulary in Newspeak?
3. What are the two outstanding characteristics of Newspeak grammar?
4. A great many of the B-vocabulary words were “euphemisms.” What are “euphemisms”? Why would a government want to use them?
5. How does Newspeak deal with the matter of sex?
6. According to the appendix, totalitarian governments like to use abbreviations. Why is this the case?
7. Why would it be nearly impossible to translate a document like the “Declaration of Independence” into Newspeak?

Activity 20

Noticing Language

Consult the appendix for answers to the following questions:

1. How would you say “Big Brother is really, really bad” in Newspeak?
2. What does “goodthink” mean? Is it a verb or a noun? Is Winston Smith a “goodthinker”?
3. What does “Oldthinkers unbellyfeel Insoc” mean in standard English? Why is it hard to translate?
4. What does “duckspeak” mean? Is it good or bad?

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

Thomas Pynchon, author of *The Crying of Lot 49* and *Gravity's Rainbow*, wrote a forward to the centennial edition of *1984*. Of the appendix, he says,

By the time they have left the Ministry of Love, Winston and Julia have entered permanently the condition of doublethink, the anterooms of annihilation, no longer in love but able to hate and love Big Brother at the same time. It is as dark an ending as can be imagined.

But strangely, it is not quite the end. We turn the page to find appended what seems to be some kind of critical essay, "The Principles of Newspeak." We remember that on page 4 we were given the option, by way of a footnote, to turn to the back of the book and read it. Some readers read it and some don't—we might see it nowadays as an early example of hypertext.

Pynchon then notes that the Book of the Month Club tried to get Orwell to remove the appendix and the chapters from the Goldstein book, but Orwell refused, saying, "A book is built up as a balanced structure and one cannot simply remove large chunks here and there unless one is ready to recast the whole thing." Three weeks later, the BOMC relented. Pynchon continues,

Why end a novel as passionate, violent and dark as this one with what appears to be a scholarly appendix?

The answer may lie in simple grammar. From the first sentence, "The Principles of Newspeak" is written consistently in the past tense, as if to suggest some later piece of history, post-*1984*, in which Newspeak has become literally a thing of the past—as if in some way the anonymous author of the piece is by now free to discuss, critically and objectively, the political system of which Newspeak was, in its time, the essence. Moreover, it is our own pre-Newspeak language that is being used to write the essay. Newspeak was supposed to have become general by 2050, and yet it appears that it did not last that long, let alone triumph, that the ancient humanistic ways of thinking inherent in standard English have persisted, survived, and ultimately prevailed, and that perhaps the social and moral order it speaks for has even, somehow, been restored. (xxiv)

Discuss the following questions about the appendix.

- What do you think of Pynchon's argument about the appendix?
- Does the fact that the appendix is written in the past tense and says that the "blind, enthusiastic acceptance" of Ingsoc is "difficult to imagine today" mean that Big Brother fell from power at some point?

- Does this introduce a note of hope in an otherwise dark novel?
- Does it potentially change the meaning of the novel? Write your thoughts about these questions in your notebook.

Postreading (“The Principles of Newspeak”)

Activity 22

Thinking Critically

1. Newspeak was in part a long-term project to simplify and regularize the English language. Is such a project necessarily bad? Isn't English too complicated and irregular, especially the spelling? Wouldn't a simpler language be easier for people to learn and use? Would a project like Newspeak be a good idea today? Why or why not?
2. Some editors at the Book of the Month club tried to get Orwell to leave out the appendix, but he refused. What function does the appendix have in the book? Why would editors want him to take it out? Were they right? Do you think Orwell was right to refuse? If Orwell wanted to show that Big Brother would not last forever, should he have written the novel in another way? Why or why not?

Prereading (Section Two)

Activity 23

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

After reading Section One and “The Principles of Newspeak,” what do you think is going to happen to Winston? Write two or three sentences in your notebook as a record of your predictions at the present time.

Reading (Section Two)

Activity 24

Noticing Language

There are 10 chapters in Section Two of *1984*. As you read the section, for each chapter, note one or more words that are either unknown to you or that you are uncertain about. Choose words that seem to be important or interesting because of their context or frequency, or even because they sound interesting. Keep choosing until you have 12 words, which means you will have more than one for at least two chapters. For each word you choose, do the following:

- Copy the sentence in which you found it in your notebook.
- Underline or highlight the word.

Activity 25

- Describe what part of speech it is as used in the sentence.
- Write down some ideas about what it might mean, and why you think so. Don't be afraid to be wrong. You are just making an educated guess.
- In your group, take turns sharing the words and sentences you chose. Ask group members to help you define your words more accurately. Some will probably know your words better than you do. You will probably know more about other words that they have chosen.
- Look up your words in a good dictionary or online. How close were you and the group to the dictionary meaning?
- Write your own sentences using the words.

Reading for Understanding

Skim the list of questions below before you begin to read. As you read, make check marks in the margin, or write on sticky notes to indicate places where you have found information relevant to the questions.

Chapter I

1. Why does Winston have conflicting emotions when he sees the dark-haired girl from the fiction department fall down?
2. Why is Winston stunned when he reads what the girl wrote on the note she gave him?
3. Why is it so difficult for Winston to meet the girl?
4. In the relationship between Winston and Julia, who seems to be in charge? Why?

Chapter II

5. Why does Winston trust Julia?
6. Why is Julia attracted to Winston?
7. Who is Julia? What are her strengths? What are her weaknesses?

Chapter III

8. Why can't Winston and Julia get married?
9. What kind of job does Julia have?

Chapter IV

10. Julia brings coffee, tea, and sugar to the room above the junk shop. But she also has make-up and perfume. Why is Winston so surprised to see her wearing make-up?

Chapter V

11. What happens to Syme?
12. Julia thinks that the rocket bombs that hit London everyday are fired by the government of Oceania itself to keep the people frightened. Does that seem possible?
13. When Winston explains that the past is being erased, Julia doesn't care. Is she right?

Chapter VI

14. Why is the meeting with O'Brien important?

Chapter VII

15. What happened to Winston's mother? What kind of boy was he?
16. Winston suggests that they should break up before they are found out. Julia says no. Why?
17. When they are talking about torture, confession, and betrayal, Julia says "They can make you say anything—*anything*—but they can't make you believe it. They can't get inside you." Do you think that is true?

Chapter VIII

18. Why is it surprising that O'Brien makes reference to Symes?
19. Why do Winston and Julia go together to O'Brien's house?
20. How is the life of an Inner Party member different from the life of an Outer Party member?
21. O'Brien asks Winston and Julia to agree to do some horrible things. Why do they agree to everything except being separated?

Chapter IX

22. Why did Winston have to work ninety hours in five days?
23. What is in Winston's briefcase?

(The rest of this chapter and Chapter X are dealt with below.)

Activity 26

Considering the Structure of the Text

When Winston finally gets to read the book by Emmanuel Goldstein, he reads part of Chapter 1 and then reads Chapter III. Later, when he is with Julia, he starts reading Chapter 1 aloud to her. We read along with him. Why does Orwell present the book in this way instead of paraphrasing it or treating it as another appendix?

Annotating and Questioning the Text

In Section One, Chapter VII, Winston is thinking about his job, which is to rewrite newspapers and other historical documents to correspond with what Big Brother is doing in the present. He writes in his diary, "I understand HOW: I do not understand WHY." Now, in Section Two, Chapter IX, he has a copy of the forbidden book, Emmanuel Goldstein's *Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*. He can only keep it for a few days, but he imagines reading and re-reading it many times. He is very excited about it, and he thinks that it will reveal why his society is organized the way it is and explain the purpose behind Big Brother's actions. However, he only gets to read Chapter 3 and part of Chapter 1. Julia falls asleep while he is reading Chapter 1 to her.

As you read Goldstein's book along with Winston, look for answers to the following questions:

1. How is Goldstein's book organized?
2. According to Goldstein,
 - a. Why is the war never-ending?
 - b. What is the primary purpose of modern warfare?
 - c. Why isn't there much scientific or technical progress?
 - d. What are the two great aims of the Party?
 - e. What are the three groups that humans have been divided into since before history?
 - f. Do the three huge countries in the world have different political systems?
 - g. What are the four ways a ruling group can fall from power?
 - h. What is the biggest danger to Big Brother?
 - i. What is "crimestop"?
 - j. Why is doublethink so important to *Insoc*?
3. Does the part of the book that Winston reads answer his question about why?
4. Do Goldstein's ideas make sense? Do you agree with them? Do they apply only to Winston's society, or are they applicable to our own? Why or why not?
5. If Oceania is an oligarchy, then it doesn't have a dictator. Who or what is Big Brother?

Activity 28

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

When Winston says near the end of Section Two, Chapter II, “I hate purity, I hate goodness. I don’t want any virtue to exist anywhere. I want everyone to be corrupt to the bones,” what kind of virtue is he talking about? Is it what we normally think of as purity and virtue, or is it what Big Brother calls virtue? What is the difference?

Julia says that it is probably safe to meet in the clearing one more time, in about a month, but on about the second page of Chapter III, the narrator says, “As it happened they never went back to the clearing in the wood.” Although Winston’s thoughts often move from the present to the past and back again, it is unusual for the narrator to take a perspective that is clearly from a future time when the story is over. It requires speculation, but why do you think that Orwell chose to do this at this point? What is the effect?

Postreading (Section Two)

Activity 29

Summarizing and Responding

At the end of Chapter X, Winston and Julia are captured by the Thought Police. In your notebook, describe what happens. Where was the telescreen? Who did Mr. Charrington turn out to be? What does this mean? Did the Thought Police know everything that Winston was doing from the very beginning? How do you know?

Activity 30

Thinking Critically

O’Brien later uses what Winston and Julia agree to against them in his torture/interrogation to show that they have no principles and like Big Brother are willing to use any means to achieve their ends. This scene is key to the moral and ethical issues raised by the novel. Is it right to do wrong if the purpose is good? Is it right to do wrong for love? Think of these questions as you write and perform the skit below.

Skit Scenario

When Winston and Julia first meet O’Brien, he asks them to agree to do anything they are told to do, including committing murder, performing sabotage that could cause the deaths of hundreds of innocent people, and throwing acid in a child’s face. They agree to everything except separating and never seeing each other again, which is somewhat illogical because they have already agreed to commit suicide if asked. It seems that if Big Brother will do anything to stay in power, the Brotherhood will do anything to defeat Big Brother. If you were in Winston and Julia’s situation, would you agree to these actions? Write an alternative version of this scene in which Winston and Julia take a stronger moral stance and resist

some of the things to which O'Brien asks them to agree. What would happen if they resisted?

In writing this skit, think about the tone of the novel at this point. Is it ironic or satirical? Does it have any element of humor? Or is it completely tragic? What kind of tone do you want to create in your skit?

Prereading (Section Three)

Activity 31

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Re-read the predictions you made for Sections One and Two. How accurate were they? Now write a few sentences in your notebook predicting what will happen to Winston and Julia now that they have been captured by the Thought Police.

Reading (Section Three)

Activity 32

Reading for Understanding

Skim the list of questions below before you begin to read. As you read, make check marks in the margin or write on sticky notes to indicate places where you have found information relevant to the questions.

Chapter I

1. As Winston waits in the jail cell in the Ministry of Love, he meets the poet Ampleforth and his neighbor Parsons. What are they in for?
2. What is Room 101?
3. O'Brien comes in the cell with a guard. What does Winston say? How does O'Brien reply? What does this mean?

Chapter II

4. Why does O'Brien say that the photograph of Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford, which he just showed to Winston, didn't exist and that he doesn't remember it?
5. For the Party, does the past have a real existence?
6. Why does O'Brien want Winston to say that there are five fingers when he is only holding up four? Why isn't he satisfied when Winston finally says five? What lesson is O'Brien trying to teach Winston?
7. Winston wonders why they are torturing him if they are just going to kill him anyway. What is O'Brien's answer?

8. O'Brien says that the rule of the Party is forever. However, the appendix appears to be written in a future time when there is no Party. Is this a contradiction in the book?
9. What, according to O'Brien, is the purpose of the Party?
10. Why is O'Brien spending so much time on Winston?

Chapter III

11. Winston's torture and interrogation have several stages. What techniques are used in each stage?
12. According to O'Brien, who actually wrote *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*? What does this mean, if true?
13. O'Brien teaches that there is no world outside of the human mind, so that the Party can control reality in the same way that he can make Winston see five fingers when there are only four. This is "Believing is seeing" rather than "Seeing is believing," as we would normally say. Is it possible to so thoroughly brainwash someone that he or she will see things that are not there?
14. O'Brien says that Winston should imagine a future in which a boot is stamping on a human face forever. Winston tries to argue that such a vision would fail. Who do you think is right?

Chapter IV

15. Winston thinks he is making progress. He is learning to practice *crimestop*. What is he learning? What is he hoping for?
16. Winston has a setback. In a daydream, he cries out. What does he say? What happens to him?

Chapter V

17. What is waiting for Winston in Room 101? What does it make him do?

Chapter VI

18. Winston meets Julia. What happens?
19. What finally causes Winston to think he loves Big Brother?

Activity 33

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

1. In Section One, Chapter VIII, Winston learns a nursery rhyme from Mr. Charrington, the junk dealer who later turns out to be a member of the Thought Police. He learns the first two lines, plus the concluding couplet:

*Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St. Clement's,
You owe me five farthings, say the bells of St. Martin's.
Here comes a candle to light you to bed,
And here comes a chopper to chop off your head.*

In Section Two, Chapter IV, Julia surprises him by reciting the rhyme plus one more line:

When will you pay me? Say the bells of Old Bailey.

Winston says it is like two halves of a countersign, such as a spy would use. Julia also knows the lines about the candle and the chopper. In Section Two, Chapter VIII, Winston recites the first line of the rhyme to O'Brien and asks him if he knows more of it. O'Brien recites the three lines Winston knows plus one more:

When I grow rich, say the bells of Shoreditch.

By the end, we know that O'Brien has been watching Winston for seven years and knows everything about him, so it is not surprising that O'Brien knows the rhyme. What does this rhyme mean in the context of the novel? Why does Orwell distribute it throughout the novel like pieces of a puzzle?

2. In Section Two, Chapter IV, Winston hears a washerwoman sing a popular song produced by a sub-section of the Music Department of the Ministry of Truth using a machine called a "versificator." Later, in Section Two, Chapter X, just before he is arrested, he hears her sing it again. The text gives us two verses, in the dialect of the proles, which drops initial "h" sounds and turns long "a" sounds into something that sounds like "eye":

*It was only an 'opeless fancy;
It passed like an Ipril dye,
But a look an' a word an' the dreams they stirred
They 'ave stolen my 'eart awye!"
They sye that time 'eals all things,
They sye you can always forget;
But the smiles an' the tears across the years
They twist my 'eartstrings yet!*

Winston thinks of this song as "rubbish" but finds it strangely moving anyway. What does this song mean in the context of the novel? Why write it in dialect? How can something written by a machine take on such a human quality? Why does Orwell include it twice?

Postreading (Section Three)

Activity 34

Summarizing and Responding

First, fill out the grid below. Then, in a paragraph, summarize the debate between O'Brien and Winston that takes place in the torture sessions. What are the issues? What are O'Brien's arguments? What are Winston's responses? In a second paragraph, respond to the debate. What would you do or say in Winston's situation? Does O'Brien really win the debate? If so, would he win without torture?

Issue	O'Brien's Position	Winston's Position
History and Past Events	The past has no objective existence.	Memories and written records refer to an actual past.
Perception		
Purpose of Torture		
Existence		
Power		
The Laws of Physics		
The Spirit of Humanity		

Activity 35

Thinking Critically

At the end of the novel, Winston is sitting in the Chestnut Tree Café drinking gin, just like Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford before him. He thinks that if he can love Big Brother, he will finally be shot and put out of his misery. The last two sentences of the novel say, "But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother" (308).

In what way, is this a victory? What do you think happens to Winston after this moment? Is he shot? Or does something else happen? At the beginning of Section Three, after Winston has been in jail watching prisoners come and go for a while, O'Brien comes in with a guard. Winston, thinking that O'Brien has also been arrested, blurts out, "They've got you too!" O'Brien responds, "They got me a long time ago" (245). Do you think that O'Brien has been through the same process of interrogation and torture that he will put Winston through? Is it possible that Winston, instead of being shot, will be recruited into the Inner Party? What do you think? Explain your reasoning.

In your notebook, write down what you think happens after the last scene in the novel.

Activity 36

Reflecting on Your Reading Process

In your notebook, answer the following questions:

- What have you learned from reading and discussing *1984*? Did it meet your expectations? What surprised you about the novel?
- What reading strategies did you use or learn in this module? Which strategies will you use in reading other texts? How will these strategies apply in other classes?
- In what ways has your ability to read and discuss complex novels like this one improved? Will this experience change the way you read?
- Some argue that *1984* was written to warn against the dangers of the Soviet Union, but because the Soviet Union fell apart in 1991, this book is now irrelevant. Do you agree? Should high school students still read *1984*?

Supplementary Article 1 – "Long Beach Police to Use 400 Cameras Citywide to Fight Crime"

Prereading

Activity 37

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Read the title, the summary, the date, the author, the place of publication, and the first sentence. In your notebook, answer the following questions:

- What is the article about?
- How does this connect with *1984*?
- Do you think this article might actually refer to *1984*?
- Would you say that this development might be called "Orwellian"?

Reading

Activity 38

Annotating and Questioning the Text

In your notebook, answer the following questions:

What facts are reported in this text that might be useful in supporting an argument about surveillance cameras?

Do you agree with the police Chief when he says that this is “not a case of Big Brother watching” because the link to the cameras will only be activated when police already know an incident is happening in a certain area? How is this different from Big Brother? How will the police know that something is happening? Won’t they review the tape and see everything that happened anyway?

Activity 39

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

In a news story like this one, the reporter interviews sources and records their responses either in a notebook or with a tape recorder. Then he or she summarizes, paraphrases, or quotes what the sources said. In this article, there are 15 paragraphs. How many paragraphs have actual quotes? How do you think the reporter decided what to quote and what to paraphrase? Why not just print exactly what the police chief said? Would that make a more accurate story? Write your answers in your *1984* notebook.

Postreading

Activity 40

Summarizing and Responding

Write a one-paragraph summary of the content of this article.

Supplementary Article 2—“That’s No Phone. That’s My Tracker.”

Prereading

Activity 41

Getting Ready to Read

Write answers to the following questions in your *1984* notebook.

1. What kind of cellphone do you have? Some people have to have the latest smartphone with all the latest features. Others use simpler phones because they are cheaper, easier to use, and/or familiar to them. What do you use your phone for? For each category, estimate the percentage of use. The total should add up to 100%.

Cell Phone Use	Percent Time
Phone calls	
Text messages	
Email	
Web surfing	
Playing games	
Listening to music	
Watching videos	
Taking pictures or videos	
Telling time	
Keeping track of appointments	
Finding out where you are and where you are going	
Using Facebook or other social media	
Running apps	
Other things	
Total	

2. After analyzing how you use your phone, do you still think it should be called a “phone”? Why or why not?
3. Has your phone ever been stolen? Is your phone password protected? What would happen if someone with bad intentions had access to the data on your phone?
4. Do you ever take precautions to keep from being tracked? Why or why not?

Activity 42

Exploring Key Concepts

In paragraph 15 of the article, the authors quote Matt Blaze, a professor of computer and information science at the University of Pennsylvania, who uses the word “Panopticon.” The word means “all seeing,” pan meaning “all” and opticon meaning “seeing.” The word was used in the late eighteenth century by English utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham to describe his circular design for a prison in which one guard could observe all of the prisoners at once without being seen himself. If our smartphones are observing everything we do without our knowing, are we all in the Panopticon? When you read the article and encounter this word, see if you agree with Blaze that this is an appropriate word to use.

Activity 43

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Taking the title and the first sentence into account, do you think that the authors want us to stop calling our smartphones “phones”? What arguments do you think they will make? No matter how good the arguments are, do you think having a campaign to change what people call these devices would work? Write your answers in your 1984 notebook.

Reading

Activity 44

Reading for Understanding

Keeping your predictions in mind, read “That’s No Phone. That’s My Tracker.”

Activity 45

Noticing Language

The following phrases establish part of the tone of the article. Look at them as separate items and in context. What do they mean? How do they make you feel? How do they influence the argument? Finally, what is the overall emotional effect of these phrases on the reader? Do they make you want to agree with the authors? Write your answers in your 1984 notebook.

	What does the phrase mean?	How does it make you feel?	How does it influence your attitude toward the argument?
frictionless sharing (¶ 4)	Sharing without knowing	Uncomfortable	Reinforces it
frictionless surveillance (¶ 4)			
invasive services (¶ 5)			
semantic game (¶ 6)			
the most gregarious of sharers (¶ 8)			

diabolical element (¶ 9)			
predictive modeling (¶ 10)			
we are naïve (¶ 11)			
They see everything (¶ 11)			
cellphones, known as burners (¶ 12)			
malware can keep it on (¶ 13)			

Activity 46

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

This article begins and ends with the question of what we should call smartphones and argues that “trackers” would be more accurate. Is that the real rhetorical purpose of the article? Do they really want us to rename our phones? If not, why did they frame the argument in this way? Write your answer in your *1984* notebook.

Postreading

Activity 47

Summarizing and Responding

Write a “rhetorical précis” of the article in your *1984* notebook.

Sentence 1: Name of author, genre, and title of work, date in parentheses; a rhetorically accurate verb; and a THAT clause containing the major assertion or thesis statement in the work.

Sentence 2: An explanation of how the author develops and supports the thesis, usually in chronological order.

Sentence 3: A statement of the author’s apparent purpose, followed by an “in order to” phrase.

Sentence 4: A description of the intended audience and/or the relationship the author establishes with the audience.

Activity 48

Thinking Critically

Write answers to the questions below in your *1984* notebook.

1. Paragraph 6 discusses the various names that have been suggested for smartphones—tracker, robot, minicomputer—and says,

This is not a semantic game. Names matter, quite a bit. In politics and advertising, framing is regarded as essential because what you call something influences what you think about it. That's why there are battles over the tags "Obamacare" and "death panels."

Is it true that the name of something influences the way you think about it? Does it influence the way you use it? What effect do you think changing the name of the device will actually have?

2. Paragraph 8 asks, "What's the harm?" and then says,

The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, ruling about the use of tracking devices by the police, noted that GPS data can reveal whether a person "is a weekly church goer, a heavy drinker, a regular at the gym, an unfaithful husband, an outpatient receiving medical treatment, an associate of particular individuals or political groups—and not just one such fact about a person, but all such facts."

Does this quotation answer the question? Does it show that there is actual harm in cellphone tracking? Why or why not?

Activity 49

Reflecting on Your Reading Process

Did reading these two articles change your interpretation of *1984*? Did it put the novel in a new context? Do the two articles go together in any way? Write your answers in your *1984* notebook.

Connecting Reading to Writing

Discovering What You Think

Activity 50

Considering the Writing Task

Read the writing task assigned by your instructor. As you think about what it asks you to do, flip through your notebook looking for possible connections to the topic.

Writing Task 1: The Party and Power

Core question: Can a society based on hate survive?

Winston Smith writes in his diary, "I understand HOW: I do not understand WHY." O'Brien tries to answer his question.

The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: only power, pure power. . . (272)

The first thing you must realize is that power is collective. The individual only has power in so far as he ceases to be an individual. You know the Party slogan: "Freedom is Slavery". Has it ever occurred to you that it is reversible? Slavery is freedom. Alone—free—the human being is always defeated. It must be so, because every human being is doomed to die, which is the greatest of all failures. But if he can make complete, utter submission, if he can escape from his identity, if he can merge himself in the Party so that he IS the Party, then he is all-powerful and immortal. The second thing for you to realize is that power is power over human beings. Over the body—but, above all, over the mind. (273)

O'Brien also argues that the Party has control over external reality because nothing exists outside the mind, although he admits that for certain purposes this is not true. Those instances can be taken care of by doublethink. He asks Winston how one man asserts power over another. Winston answers, "By making him suffer." O'Brien agrees.

Exactly. By making him suffer. Obedience is not enough. Unless he is suffering, how can you be sure that he is obeying your will and not his own? Power is in inflicting pain and humiliation. Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing. Do you begin to see, then, what kind of world we are creating? It is the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined. A world of fear and treachery and torment, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not less but MORE merciless as it refines itself. Progress in our world will be progress towards more pain. The old civilizations claimed that they were founded on love or justice. Ours is founded upon hatred. In our world there will be no emotions except fear, rage, triumph, and self-abasement. Everything else we shall destroy—everything. Already we are breaking down the habits of thought which have survived from before the Revolution. We have cut the links between child and parent, and between man and man, and between man and woman. No one dares trust a wife or a child or a friend any longer. But in the future there will be no wives and no friends. Children will be taken from their mothers at birth, as one takes eggs from a hen. The sex instinct will be eradicated. Procreation will be an annual formality like the renewal of a ration card. We shall abolish the orgasm. Our neurologists are at work upon it now. There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the Party.

There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy. There will be no art, no literature, no science. When we are omnipotent we shall have no more need of science. There will be no distinction between beauty and ugliness. There will be no curiosity, no enjoyment of the process of life. All competing pleasures will be destroyed. But always—do not forget this, Winston—always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—forever. (276-77)

Winston responds that it would be impossible to found a civilization on fear and hatred and cruelty and that such a society could never endure because “It would have no vitality. It would disintegrate. It would commit suicide.”

Winston is at a disadvantage in this debate because if he argues too well, O’Brien will turn the dial and give him a big dose of excruciating pain. You, however, are free to argue in any way you want.

Who is right, Winston or O’Brien? In a well-organized essay, discuss whether or not a society based on hate and suffering such as O’Brien describes could exist for very long. Would the intoxication of power and the thrill of victory be enough motivation for people to continue living without friendship or love? Could you live in such a society? Why or why not? In supporting your arguments, use evidence from the novel, other texts, and your own experience.

Writing Task 2: The Fall of Big Brother

Core question: What might cause the fall of Big Brother?

At the end of the novel *1984* is an appendix called “The Principles of Newspeak.” What is most interesting about this appendix is the tense in which it is written. It begins,

Newspeak was the official language of Oceania and had been devised to meet the ideological needs of Ingsoc, or English Socialism. In the year *1984* there was not as yet anyone who used Newspeak as his sole means of communication, either in speech or writing. (309)

The first sentence contains a past tense (was) and a past perfect passive construction (had been devised) that clearly indicate that Newspeak was devised at a particular point in the past, was the official language for a while, but no longer is. Is it only Newspeak that has faded from use? Here is a selection from later in the article:

Consider, for example, such a typical sentence from a Times leading article as OLDTHINKERS UNBELLYFEEL INGSOC. The

shortest rendering that one could make of this in Oldspeak would be: "Those whose ideas were formed before the Revolution cannot have a full emotional understanding of the principles of English Socialism." But this is not an adequate translation. . . . only a person thoroughly grounded in Ingsoc could appreciate the full force of the word BELLYFEEL, which implied a blind, enthusiastic acceptance difficult to imagine today; or of the word OLDTHINK, which was inextricably mixed up with the idea of wickedness and decadence. (315)

It is clear that the author is writing at a point in time after Big Brother has fallen, and that the "blind, enthusiastic acceptance" demanded by Big Brother is in the writer's time "difficult to imagine." O'Brien tells Winston that "Big Brother is forever." Clearly O'Brien was wrong. At some point, the reign of Big Brother collapsed. What caused the downfall of Big Brother?

Perhaps we can find a clue about the answer to this question in *The Principles and Practices of Oligarchical Collectivism* by Emmanuel Goldstein. In Chapter One, "Ignorance is Strength," the author writes,

There are only four ways in which a ruling group can fall from power. Either it is conquered from without, or it governs so inefficiently that the masses are stirred to revolt, or it allows a strong and discontented Middle group to come into being, or it loses its own self-confidence and willingness to govern. These causes do not operate singly, and as a rule all four of them are present in some degree. A ruling class which could guard against all of them would remain in power permanently. (212)

In a well-organized essay, answer the following question:

We know from the evidence in the appendix that Big Brother eventually fell from power. Assuming that Goldstein (or O'Brien and the group of Inner Party members who O'Brien claims wrote this book) is right, which of the four causes is most likely to have been the primary cause of the downfall of Big Brother? Support your argument with evidence from the novel.

Writing Task 3: The Party and Objective Reality

Core question: Can Big Brother decide what is real and what is not?

In Section One, Chapter VII, as Winston writes in his diary he thinks

The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command. His heart sank as he thought of the enormous power arrayed against him, the ease with which any Party intellectual would overthrow him in debate, the subtle arguments which he would not be able to understand, much less answer. And yet he was in the right! They were wrong and he was right. The obvious, the silly, and the true had got to

be defended. Truisms are true, hold on to that! The solid world exists, its laws do not change. Stones are hard, water is wet, objects unsupported fall towards the earth's center. With the feeling that he was speaking to O'Brien, and also that he was setting forth an important axiom, he wrote:

Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted, all else follows. (83)

In Section Three, Chapter II, O'Brien is torturing Winston. He asks Winston if he remembers writing "Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four." After Winston acknowledges that he wrote that, O'Brien holds up four fingers and asks, "How many fingers?" Winston says "four." O'Brien then asks, "And if the party says that it is not four but five—then how many?"

Winston answers "four" and gets a strong jolt of pain (257). This continues until Winston finally answers "Five! Five! Five!" O'Brien, however, is still not satisfied. He says, "No, Winston, that is no use. You are lying. You still think there are four. How many fingers, please?" Eventually, Winston agrees that he sees five fingers, and for an instant, actually sees five. Later, O'Brien says,

We control matter because we control the mind. Reality is inside the skull. You will learn by degrees, Winston. There is nothing that we could not do. Invisibility, levitation—anything. I could float off this floor like a soap bubble if I wish to. I do not wish to, because the Party does not wish it. You must get rid of those nineteenth-century ideas about the laws of Nature. We make the laws of Nature. (274)

In Big Brother's Oceania, reality is whatever the Party says it is. It is not enough for Winston to say what Big Brother wants or do what the Party wants. He must actually believe it and see it. Of course, history and news are easy to control if the government has absolute control of the media. After all, it was Winston's job to rewrite past news to conform to the Party's current whims. Big Brother, however, claims to be above even the laws of mathematics and physics.

In a well-organized essay, discuss the relationship between media control and perception of reality. In writing your essay, it may be useful to consider the following questions. First, is it possible for even a very powerful government to control the minds of its citizens so thoroughly that they no longer believe in the law of gravity or other scientific facts? What tools does Big Brother use to do this, and how effective are they? Would these tools work in our own society? Second, what would happen to a society without history or scientific knowledge? Would any kind of progress be possible? Finally, is there any evidence that this is happening in our own society? In supporting your arguments, use evidence from the novel, other texts, and your own experience.

Writing Task 4: Surveillance and Big Brother

Core question: Is our technology taking us closer to the world of Big Brother?

Surveillance technology has advanced far beyond anything Orwell imagined, and the terms “Orwellian” and “Big Brother is watching” are often used in conjunction with remote control cameras and Internet tracking technology. For example, “Long Beach Police to Use 400 Cameras Citywide to Fight Crime,” a recent article in the *Los Angeles Times*, Richard Winton reports that the City of Long Beach, California, has connected a network of surveillance cameras throughout the city. Police Chief Jim McDonnell says,

We are using every technology advantage to improve safety in this city. Long Beach officers will now know even before they arrive what potential threats they face. It will help us to respond to crimes better and prevent other crimes.

The chief also said it won’t be a case of “big brother is watching,” because the camera feed will only be activated when the police have a report that a crime is in progress.

“That’s No Phone. That’s My Tracker,” an article in *The New York Times* by Peter Maass and Megha Rajagopalan, focuses on surveillance technology that we voluntarily carry with us at all times, our cell phones. The authors suggest that we should really call them “trackers.” They say,

Most doubts about the principal function of these devices were erased when it was recently disclosed that cellphone carriers responded 1.3 million times last year to law enforcement requests for call data. That’s not even a complete count, because T-Mobile, one of the largest carriers, refused to reveal its numbers. It appears that millions of cellphone users have been swept up in government surveillance of their calls and where they made them from. Many police agencies don’t obtain search warrants when requesting location data from carriers.

1984 provides a cautionary tale about the potential of surveillance technology to allow an authoritarian government to control the population. At present, this technology is being used for relatively benign purposes such as crime fighting and advertising, but clearly the totalitarian oligarchy of *1984* would be overjoyed to deploy it. The government, or another entity, could easily see every Web site you have visited, read every message you ever sent, and listen to every phone call. Could this technology lead eventually to totalitarian control of our thoughts and actions as in *1984*? What factors are in place to prevent this? Has *1984* itself given us enough warning to make us aware of the dangers so that we will not allow this to happen? How scared should we be?

In a well-organized essay, discuss how close our current society is to the potential of Big Brother and *1984*. In order to do this, you will

need to describe the surveillance technology used by Big Brother, including its capabilities and limitations, and compare it to the capabilities of current technology. You will also need to discuss who uses the technology and the purposes for which it is used. Finally, if Big Brother really might be watching us, what can we do to stop it?

Note: You may decide that in order to support your arguments effectively you need to do some further research beyond the novel and the two additional articles.

Activity 51

Taking a Stance

In your group, discuss the core question of the assigned writing prompt. Each member of the group then takes on the persona of either a character in the novel or another person you know. What would that person say or argue about the core question? For example,

- What would O'Brien say?
- What would Winston say?
- What would Julia say?
- What would Parsons say?
- What would your teacher say?
- What would the football coach say?
- What would your favorite movie character say?
- What would _____ say?
- Then, at the end of the discussion, "What do YOU say?"

In your notebook, write down your answer to the last question, and explain how your actual position differs from the positions taken by the character you played and the other characters in the group.

Activity 52

Gathering Evidence to Support Your Claims

- What is your position on the issue of the writing prompt? Can you state it in one sentence?
- Why do you think this? What evidence do you have for this position? Go through your notes, annotations and other materials for *1984*. What can you use to support your argument? Do you need to go beyond the novel itself? Do you need to do some research?
- What would people who disagree with you say? What evidence supports their position? How can you argue against them?

- Is the issue too complex to be stated as a black and white, right or wrong, yes or no position? Are there degrees of probability or certainty? For example, no one can know for certain that our society is turning into Big Brother. Is the *possibility* strong enough that we should take some action to prevent it? How will you handle a nuanced argument like this?

Activity 53

Getting Ready to Write

Do exercise 1 or 2 below.

1. Rhetorical Quickwrite

Who is your audience for this writing? What is your plan? What do you want to tell them? What are your most important points? What are you passionate about on this issue? How will you convey these ideas and this passion? How do you want your writing to affect the reader? Write a quick paragraph in response to these questions.

2. Scratch Outline

With the novel and all of your notes and annotations arranged around you, make a scratch outline of your writing plan. What is your main idea? What comes first? How will you support it? What comes next? After that? How will you conclude?

Writing Rhetorically

Entering the Conversation

Activity 54

Composing a Draft

With your audience and purpose in mind, but focusing mainly on getting your ideas on paper, begin writing a first draft of your paper on *1984*.

Activity 55

Considering Structure

As you pause midway in your writing, think about what you have done so far and where you are going.

If you made a scratch outline before you started writing, you may find that your plan is working, but it is also possible that the writing is taking you in a different direction. You may find that as you write, the arguments connect in a different way than you imagined or that you have thought of completely new arguments while you are writing. As you make adjustments in your organizational structure, keep the audience in mind. Will your reader be able to follow along with your reasoning?

Activity 56

Using the Words of Others (and Avoiding Plagiarism)

As you use the material from your notes, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do you have page numbers for quotations and paraphrases?
- Do you have a good balance between quotations and paraphrases? Did you quote only when you have a good reason to, i.e., the language itself is important?
- Have you “framed” quotations, especially block quotations, by introducing them first and then responding to them afterwards? For example,

O’Brien claims that the Party controls reality. He says,

We control matter because we control the mind. Reality is inside the skull. You will learn by degrees, Winston. There is nothing that we could not do. Invisibility, levitation—anything. I could float off this floor like a soap bubble if I wish to. (274)

However, the party does not really have god-like powers. It just creates illusions.

In your *1984* notebook, note areas of your draft that you plan to revise.

Activity 57

Negotiating Voices

In the example in Activity 56, the block quote is in O’Brien’s voice, and the surrounding material is in the essay writer’s voice. When there are multiple sources, however, sometimes the different voices get confused. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is it clear who says and believes what?
- Is my own voice consistent in tone? What kind of ethos have I created? Who do I sound like?

Revising and Editing

Activity 58

Revising Rhetorically

Now it is time to think more about the reader and begin moving toward a reader-based draft that is ready to submit to your instructor for feedback. Think about the following questions:

- Have I provided the reader with what he or she needs to understand my ideas?
- Do I have enough support for each point?

- Do my arguments work together?
- Do I have transitions between different parts of my arguments?
- Does my conclusion follow from the rest of the paper? Is it more than just a restatement of the introduction?
- Have I accomplished my rhetorical purpose? Have I engaged the reader's interest? Have I changed the reader's mind? Have I allowed the reader to see the book more clearly?

After thinking about these questions, create a short revision plan for your paper. Write it down in your *1984* notebook.

Activity 59

Considering Stylistic Choices

You should also think about the language and sentence structure you used before you turn the draft in to your instructor. Read your draft with the following questions in mind, and mark areas where you think you might have a question or a problem. Get advice from your teacher or one of your fellow students.

- Are any sentences too long or confusing?
- Are there any long quotations that could be paraphrased?
- Are there any words you are unsure about?
- Are any words too informal for an academic paper?

Activity 60

Editing the Draft

You should also proofread your paper to make sure there are no grammatical errors or usage problems. Try the following strategies:

- Think about problems your teacher has identified in past papers. Try to see if you have made the same mistakes again.
- Read your paper from the end to the beginning, sentence by sentence. This breaks the flow of the reading and enables you to be more aware of the construction of an individual sentence. This is an especially good way to catch sentence fragments. (Reading it aloud in this way may be even more effective than reading it silently.)

Activity 61

Responding to Feedback

When you receive the paper back from your instructor, look carefully at the marks and comments. Try to understand what the feedback means and why the reader responded the way he or she did. The biggest mistake that many writers make is just to delete sentences

that have problems. That will not make the essay more effective. As you make a plan for revision, think about the following questions:

- Do I need to reorganize parts of my essay?
- Do I need to add material to support my arguments? Where will I get it?
- Do I need to reconsider some of my arguments?
- Do I need to rewrite some sentences to make them clearer?
- Do I need to reword some parts?
- Do I need to correct some errors? Do I know how? How will I find out?

Activity 62

Reflecting on Your Writing Process

After you have turned in your revised draft of your *1984* paper, answer the following questions in your notebooks.

- What have you learned about your writing process?
- What were some of the most important decisions you made as you wrote this text?
- In what ways have you become a better writer?
- How will the experience of writing this paper change the way you work on your next paper?

